
NEWS

FROM THE
INDIANA STATE POLICE
IGCN - 100 NORTH SENATE AVENUE
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204-2259
www.in.gov/isp

FOR RELEASE David R. Bursten, First Sergeant
Public Information Office
Cell: 317-502-6220
Email: dbursten@isp.in.gov
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State Police Announce Web Driven Methamphetamine Investigative Tool

Elkhart County, Bristol, IN – The battle against the production of methamphetamine is now being fought online with a web driven investigative tool called the Indiana Methamphetamine Investigation System, (IMIS). The IMIS website (<http://www.in.gov/meth/> or <http://meth.in.gov>) provides for the input of data from retailers that sell pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient used to manufacture methamphetamine. This information can then be analyzed by law enforcement to detect practices consistent with the production of methamphetamine. The site also has general information about meth and the ability for the public to submit - directly from the website - tip information about suspected meth activity.

The tracking of pseudoephedrine sales is not new to Indiana; in fact, Wal-Mart and Martin's Super Markets were among the first to participate in voluntary tracking of the key pharmaceutical ingredient that is a 'must have' ingredient for production of meth. With IMIS the tracking will be automated and more user friendly for the pharmacist to input the information. As compared to the currently used paper log system the ease of use is expected to attract more voluntary participation from pharmacists across the state concerned about the diversion of a legal drug to illegal production of methamphetamine.

The IMIS site was officially launched at an unveiling demonstration held at the Indiana State Police Toll Road Post at 11:00 a.m. on August 13, 2010. Attending the IMIS launch were government officials and legislators from northern Indiana which has had a significant share of meth lab activity in the north central and north east region of the state. Following the unveiling more than three dozen law enforcement officers attended a four hour training course instructing them how to properly utilize the system, which is virtually identical to the system utilized by the State of Tennessee since 2004. Additional IMIS training events are planned for later in August as the roll out of the IMIS tool continues across Indiana in the coming weeks.

This system was provided to Indiana - free of charge - by the Tennessee Meth Task Force. The Indiana system has the same goals and expectations as the Tennessee Meth Intelligence System (TMIS). Both systems are designed for law enforcement to be used to support comprehensive community policing efforts throughout the State in preventing the production, use, and distribution of methamphetamine. Aspects of these systems include linking and sharing information derived through various technology which enables law enforcement to assess, process, record and analyze information relevant to the investigation and prosecution of methamphetamine offenders statewide. Funding to produce the Tennessee system was provided by Federal grants and Tennessee has made it part of their mission to share the system they developed with other law enforcement agencies across the country.

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Since Tennessee began using the system in 2004 more than 500,000 purchases have been identified by documented methamphetamine offenders or by individuals who exceeded the legal purchase amount of pseudoephedrine. Based on this proven track record the Indiana State Police expects to have similar success.

The Indiana State Police are the primary responders to the vast majority of active and inactive clandestine meth labs that are found operational or abandoned in urban and rural locations. Meth labs can be operational in a suspect's home or are established in motels and even in vehicles. The first documented meth lab identified by the Indiana State Police was in 1991. Since 1995 the Indiana State Police have rendered safe over 8,913 meth labs of which 1,059 of them were in 2008 and 1,343 were in 2009. So far for 2010 the Indiana State Police Methamphetamine Suppression Section (MSS) has responded to 734 meth labs as of August 1, 2010. "Look at it this way", said First Sergeant Niki Crawford, the Commander of the state police Methamphetamine Suppression Section, "26% of all the meth labs the state police has responded to were in the last two years. And every indication for 2010 is that we'll be well over 1,000 labs again."

The Indiana Methamphetamine Investigation System will be a resource database available to all Indiana law enforcement agencies – city, county, state and federal. "Remember", said F/Sgt Crawford, "we all have a vested interest in the success of this system; from the retailers that will be inputting the raw purchase data information to all the police agencies across Indiana who will access the information to track, find, arrest and prosecute these purveyors of manufactured death that are polluting their own bodies and the communities where they manufacture this despicable drug."

For more information about this release, please contact F/Sgt. David Bursten at 317-502-6220 or email at dbursten@isp.in.gov. For specific questions about IMIS contact F/Sgt. Niki Crawford at 317-234-4591 or email at ncrawford@isp.in.gov.

NOTE: The emailed version of this release included an overview "Meth Manufacture in Indiana" word document inclusive of PPT slide graphs with statistical information.

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